UNITED
NATIONS

A S

General Assembly
Security Council

Distr.
GENERAL

A/51/814
S/1997/177
3 March 1997

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

GENERAL ASSEMBLY
Fifty-first session
Agenda item 33
THE SITUATION IN THE MIDDLE EAST

SECURITY COUNCIL
Fifty-second year

Letter dated 3 March 1997 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Israel to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to refer to the letter dated 31 January 1997 (A/51/792-S/1997/100) from the Palestinian Permanent Observer to the United Nations transmitting the text of a communiqué issued by the Palestinian leadership.

This Palestinian communiqué refers to a number of issues that are currently under ongoing joint attention by both the Palestinians and Israel. It is notable that many of the issues raised in the communiqué had already been resolved, or were in the process of being resolved, even before the distribution of the document.

Israel feels that such outstanding issues can and should be settled directly between the two sides and only through the agreed channels. Attempts to politicize these issues and invite international pressure can only damage the trust between the parties and be counterproductive. Accordingly, despite the many inaccuracies in the communiqué, Israel does not propose to debate its differences in the international arena, but rather calls on the international community to encourage the Palestinian side to raise and resolve outstanding issues face to face with Israel. For its part, Israel proposes to raise its own concerns regarding Palestinian compliance with its obligations vis-à-vis Israel directly with the Palestinian side in the appropriate forums set for this purpose.

Finally, I would express particular concern at the threat contained in the communiqué that if Palestinian demands are not met this will return "the peoples of the region to their former positions of confrontation and struggle". The current peace process is based on the resolution of differences by peaceful means and the renunciation of violence. Veiled threats of violence such as those contained in the Palestinian communiqué undermine the foundations of

dialogue and damage the prospects of progress in negotiations between the two sides.

I should be grateful if you would arrange to have the text of the present letter circulated as a document of the fifty-first session of the General Assembly, under agenda item 33, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) David PELEG
Ambassador
Chargé d'affaires a.i.